

Move that the Proposed Action, Alternative One, and Alternative Two for the Salt Flat Bridge replacement be modified to include a fishermens access/parking area on BLM land on the Goose Ranch Road side of the river.

a.

June 12, 2003

Trinity River Restoration Program

RE: Draft EA/EIR Trinity River Bridges Project
Salt Flat Bridge Replacement

Providing a fishermens access/parking area on BLM land on the Goose Ranch Road side of the new bridge would put the project in compliance with the Trinity County General Plan, Lewiston Elements.for Trinity River Access..

The primary and overriding land use segment in the environmental study area is the transportation corridor for the Salt Flat Subdivision. Salt Flat Road is a bridge approach fill over a flood plain to Salt Flat Bridge. Salt Flat Bridge provides access to the Salt Flat Subdivision. The average daily traffic on Salt Flat Road was not measured but could range from 100 to 150 vehicles per day. This will increase slightly with public access to the river. ("Envisioned increases in local public use would likely be sporadic in nature, and would not necessarily involve significant numbers of public visitors at any one time.")--From page 3.2-27 of the EA/EIR).

The 70 acres of BLM land lying upstream on both sides of the river are used by rafters, float boat fisherman, kayakers, canoeists, tubers, and other river recreationists. This activity will increase slightly with the acquisition of an easement for public use of Salt Flat Road to access the river.

The EA/EIR lists under nuisance factors trespassers on private land and unauthorized parking. Goose Ranch Road residents walk down Salt Flat Road to access the river every day. With a public easement on Salt Flat Road they will no longer be trespassers, just neighbors. Private land near the river is used for casual recreation by local residents. Walk down Salt Flat Road and note the old lawn chairs sitting by the river. There will not be a change in adjacent private land use.

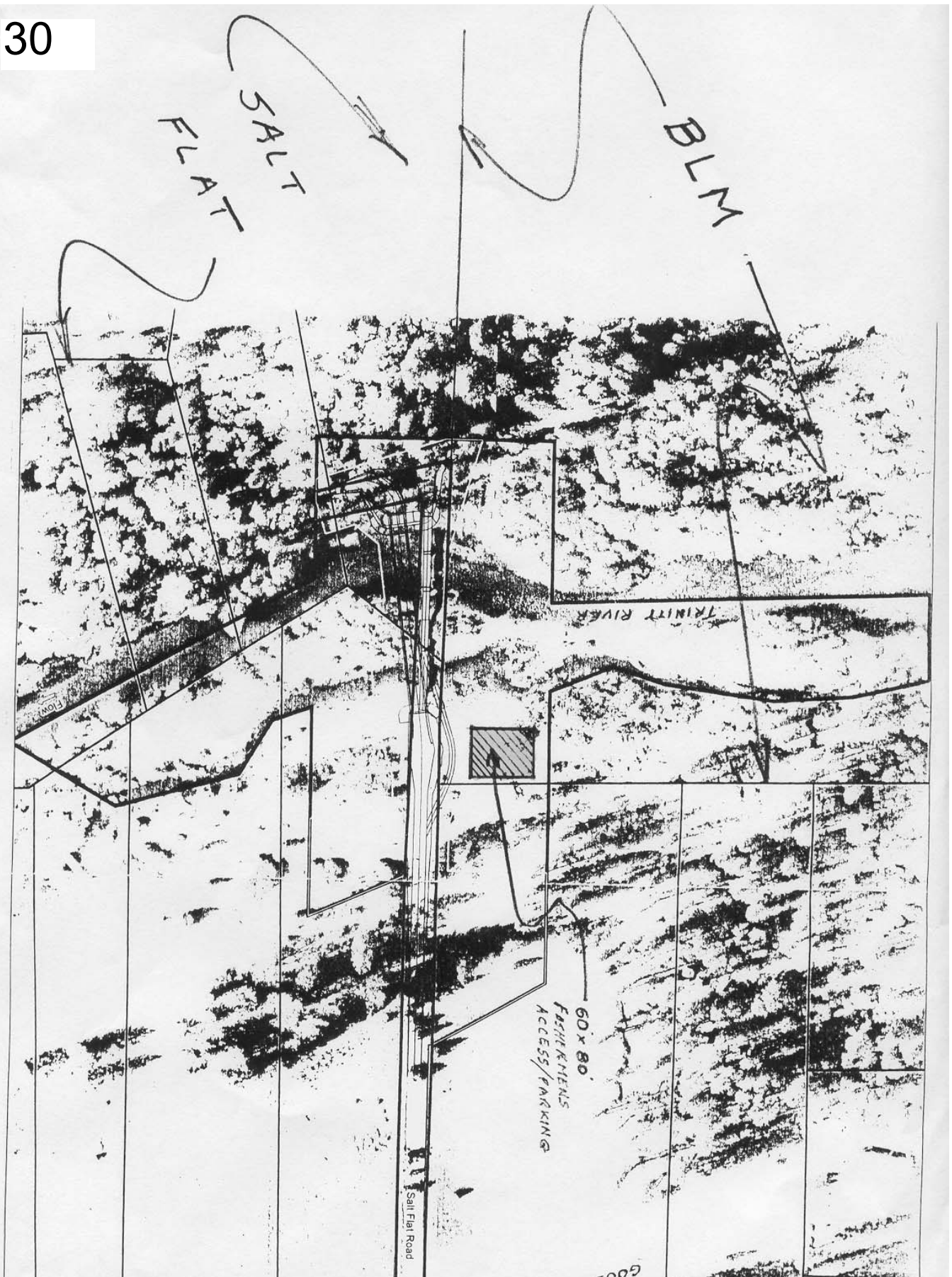
Authorized parking on public land can easily be provided by using the contractors storage and staging areas located on BLM land. The contract provisions could require the contractor to leave the area in a condition suitable for a rustic parking area. (See the County's fishermens access at Cemetery Hole for an example of a simple parking area.)

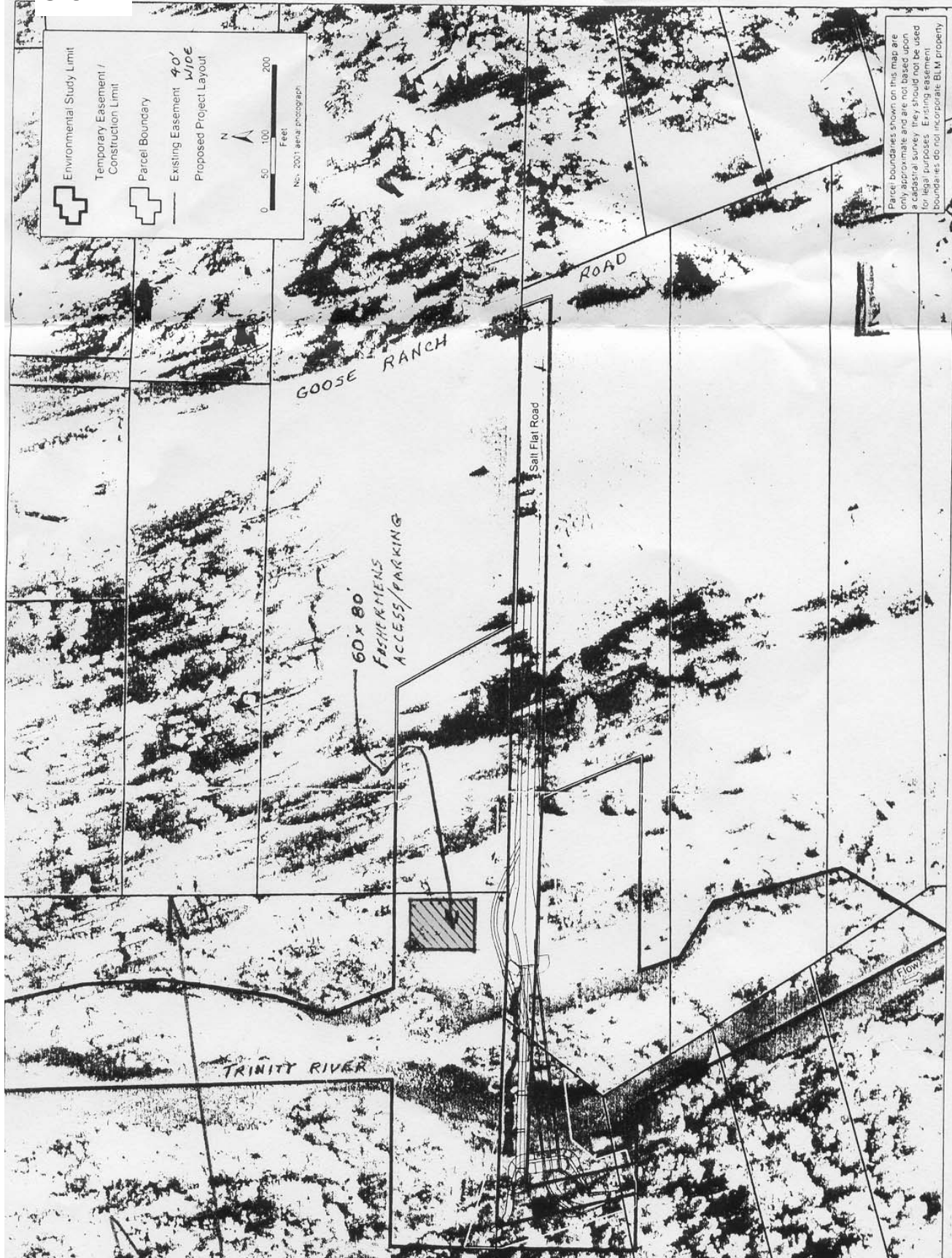
Unauthorized parking on adjacent downstream private land is easily prevented by extending the guard rail on the south side of the Salt Flat Road approach berm another 300 feet from Sta. 4+00 to 1+00. Additional R/W fencing could be installed from Sta 1+00 to Goose Ranch Road if deemed necessary.

The finding that there will be significant impacts from a change in adjacent land use is not justified by evidence presented in the Draft EA/EIR. Minor impacts can be mitigated by the examples given above.

The east approach (Salt Flat Road) to the bridge is on an existing road easement through Assessor's Parcel 025-240-14-00. The owner of this parcel is listed in County Assessor records as Mr. Robert D. Whalley. The road easement extends from Goose Ranch Road to the new bridge. No Salt Flat homeowners' lands are used.

Salt Flat property owners have "a non-exclusive right of way 40 feet in width" over Mr. Whalley's property. They do not own the underlying property. Their non-exclusive right-of-way easement does not preclude Mr. Whalley from permitting other users access over his property.





Trinity River Bridges Project
Modified 6/12/09
Figure 2-3
Salt Flat Bridge Proposed Action
Construction Limits & Easements

RESPONSE TO COMMENT: 30

Jerome C. Hauke

30-a: Thank you for your comments. Please refer to page ES-2 of the EA/EIR for the exact purpose and need statement. Generally, the purpose and need for the bridges project is to allow high-flow events to safely pass the bridge sites and to provide for increased Trinity River Division operational flexibility. The EA/EIR does not identify or assess the need for additional public access to the river. Consequently, the Salt Flat proposed and alternative actions assessed in the EA/EIR do not incorporate public access designs. Therefore, the concept of a fishermen's parking area is beyond the scope of this document. Please refer to Response to Comment #43 for additional discussion regarding public access at Salt Flat.